

Style and Fun with the new DS3

by Ian Lynas

France is famous for fashion names such as Hermes and for fine champagne but up until now not in the fame game when it comes to the car. Now the PSA group has a stand alone brand – DS.

This name owes its origins to the famous DS saloon of another era, in its day it was the most advanced set of wheels available, therefore it is fitting that the new DS3 has echoes of the original DS in style and just being that little bit different.



The DS brand was launched in 2014 and the DS3 has been the best seller with a surprise topping the sales charts in the UK ahead of its native France.

Now the second generation DS3 hits the market with a more luxury touches than the previous model.

A giant slice of the previous generation model is in the new one, sharing the same dimensions, but the latest gets a new frontal look and there is a decided further move up market in terms of not just build quality but in use of quality materials and equipment.

There is little doubt that one of the targets the new DS is aiming for is the MINI and the DS3 is definitely a car for the young set or the young at heart.

Now for a real surprise the ambassador chosen for the CS3 is not a something 20 year old model. A 94 year old New Yorker Iris Apfel who was the first women to wear jeans as a fashion item of clothing, a lady of design and style down through the years and one who adores being surrounded by young set.

You are not likely to witness Iris at the wheel of a DS3 in the buzz of downtown NY, but her eye for colour and design is very much in this small French motoring package.

There are 78 colour combinations and a variety of trims with the new DS3 and you can really make this set of wheels stand out from the crowd and there are in excess of three million options.

With this DS model clearly targeted at the younger driver connectivity is a major element and a seven inch touch screen plays an important role operating the various menus etc. Good news there are now twenty less buttons to operate than the previous model.



With modest dimensions five can travel in relative comfort and boot space at best can be described as modest, 285 litres for the Hatchback and 245 litres for the Cabrio. Safety gains its rightful place and the DS3 offers such items as active city brake and LED vision headlights.

Behind the wheel handling is good with excellent comfort for such a small car, so driver appeal is not as the same as its key rivals, many of which simply put the focus on performance.



I have just one criticism and it concerns the Cabrio, it features a full opening roof which can be operated at speeds up to 70mph. However not to take away from boot space, when open the roof does not fold into the boot instead it rests outside and largely blanks out rear vision. All trim levels of the Cabrio are fitted with a reversing aid.

Engine choice is seven with five petrol and two diesel. On the launch exercise I had the opportunity to try one of each, both with 1.6 litre capacity, the diesel with 120bhp and the petrol with a very useful 165bhp.

I was disappointed with the diesel, I found myself having to use the gearbox a lot to gain performance, however the plus side the emission figure is low.

The petrol version was lively and eager to be driven, a perfect example of just how efficient the modern petrol engine has become.

Prices start at £13 995 and later this year for the fast lane a DS3 Performance model will go on sale. This will feature the goodies we expect from such a car, 18 inch wheels, sports suspension, uprated brakes and for special sound, a large bore exhaust.

Like a small car that makes a fashion statement and one which is fun to drive then worth putting the new DS3 on your shopping list.